



Testimony of Thomas Cook
President, Friends of the Shiawassee River
Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Michigan House of Representatives
Committee on Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

Dear Chairwoman Hughes and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Tom Cook, President of the Board of the Friends of the Shiawassee River. Our community-based organizations supports House Resolution 230 that has been introduced by State Representative Ben Fredericks of Owosso, MI.

The Friends were established in 1996 with a mission to care, share, and enjoy the Shiawassee River. For the last several years we have worked to establish a National Water Trail on the Shiawassee because it will help us achieve all three goals of our mission. Over the years, we have conducted many river clean-ups, organized paddling trips, and raised funds and organized volunteers to construct five canoe/kayak launches; we are currently working to install a new launch in Vernon.

We have partnered with local governments and other nonprofits to form the Shiawassee Water Trail Coalition. We seek to establish a National Water Trail because it will help more people enjoy the recreation offered by the river, will strengthen the communities located on the river, and will help bring us together as a watershed.

We believe that passage of HR 230 by the House Outdoor and Tourism Committee, and the Michigan House of Representatives, will provide the needed support to make our Shiawassee River National Water Trail recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Thank you for your support.